

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 158665

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, AR

SUBJECT: NEWSOM CONVERSATION WITH FOREIGN MINISTER.

1. UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM ATTENDED RECEPTION AT ARGENTINE
EMBASSY ON JUNE 20 HONORING FOREIGN MINISTER MONTES.

2. DURING CONVERSATION, MONTES TOLD NEWSOM THAT GOA HAD
HELD SERIES OF MEETINGS WITH INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMISSION. MONTES SAID THAT MEETINGS HAD GONE
EXCEEDINGLY WELL AND THAT ARGENTINA HAD INVITED IAHR TO
MAKE A "SPECIAL" VISIT TO ARGENTINA TO INVESTIGATE THE
FUNCTIONING OF THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM. MONTES SAID THAT HE
HOPES TO RECEIVE THE IAHR'S REPLY ON FRIDAY.

3. UNDER SECRETARY REFERRED TO HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH
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PRESIDENT VIDELA AND INTERIOR MINISTER HARGUINDEGUY,
IN WHICH HE NOTED GREAT CONCERN IN THE UNITED STATES OVER
FATE OF DISAPPEARED AND HOPE THAT FAMILIES MIGHT BE
GIVEN MORE INFORMATION. MONTES STATED THAT THIS SUBJECT
HAD BEEN DISCUSSED BY VIDELA AND HARGUINDEGUY AFTER
NEWSOM'S VISIT. MONTES SAID THAT VIDELA INFORMED HIM
OF GOA EFFORT TO SEE WHETHER LEGAL STATUS OF DISAPPEARED

MIGHT BE RESOLVED. A JUDICIAL PROCEDURE WOULD BE REQUIRED PROBABLY BUT MONTES SAID THAT HE COULD NOT REPORT ANYTHING DEFINITIVE ON THIS QUESTION.

4. DURING FURTHER CONVERSATIONS AT RECEPTION BY DEPTOFFS WITH VISITING ARGENTINE OFFICIALS, IT BECAME EVIDENT THAT GOA IS VERY SKITTISH ABOUT DOMESTIC CRITICISM THAT IAHRC VISIT WILL ENGENDER. GOA APPARENTLY FEELS REQUIRED TO TRY TO LIMIT SCOPE OF IAHRC VISIT TO MAKE IT APPEAR LESS OBJECTIONABLE TO NATIONALIST OPINION. IAHRC THEREFORE MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO VISIT PRISONS OR TALK TO OPPOSITION POLITICAL FIGURES. DEPARTMENT DOES NOT KNOW WHETHER IAHRC WILL ACCEPT "SPECIAL" VISIT BUT WE UNDERSTAND THAT IAHRC REALIZES FULLY HOW IMPORTANT IT WILL BE TO VISIT ARGENTINA THEREBY GETTING INTO ONE OF THE KEY HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEM STATES IN LATIN AMERICA.

5. UNDER SECRETARY WILL MEET WITH DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER ALLARA EARLY FRIDAY MORNING AT WHICH TIME WE WILL LEARN MORE ABOUT IAHRC INVITATION. EMBASSY'S RESPONSE TO STATE 155078 WOULD BE APPRECIATED BY COB THURSDAY. VANCE

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